

Consumer Attitudes toward Sugar and Sweeteners - UK - January 2015

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“‘Naturalness’ appears to have become almost synonymous with healthiness and elicits trust from consumers, while anything artificial people tend to be wary of. This creates opportunities for manufacturers to move away from refined sugar and towards those with strong natural connotations in their recipe formulations.”
– Emma Clifford, Senior Food Analyst

This report looks at the following areas:

- Companies that set the bar in terms of reducing sugar content will be seen in a positive light
- Tapping into consumers' positive perceptions of 'naturalness' can boost the health credentials of products
- Openly communicating about ingredients will win the trust of shoppers

Sugar and the dangers attached to consuming too much of this ingredient became the major food issue of 2014. The increase in media coverage was noticed by over two fifths of consumers. Highlighting a direct link between this and consumer behaviour, over six in 10 people who were aware of the “sugar scare” in the media upped their efforts to monitor/reduce their sugar intake in the last 12 months, compared to almost half of the population as a whole.

While this issue has implications for the entire food industry, it is also evident in the performance of the table-top sugar market. Volume and value sales tumbled in 2014.

People remain wary of artificial sweeteners, with half of the population expressing concern about these ingredients. Meanwhile, with “naturalness” commonly eliciting trust from consumers, naturally sourced sweeteners such as stevia are met with far less resistance. A sizeable one in three adults would welcome more food products which use naturally sourced sweeteners. This suggests opportunities are ripe for New Product Development involving these ingredients, within the technical and regulatory boundaries for this.

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This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market

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